

# The Seattle Music Commission



Seattle Music Commission (Left to Right): K. Wyking Garrett, Tom Mara, Rachel White, Kate Becker, Jon Stone, Holly Hinton, Ben London, Ricardo Frazer, Megan Jasper, Marcus Womack, Karen P. Thomas, John Roderick, Jody McKinley, Adrian Burton.  
Not pictured: Patty Isacson Sabee, Emmy Jordan, Alex Kochan, DeVon Manier, Joan Sandler, Nadine Zgonc. Photo credit: Rachel White

## Annual Report & Workplan Assessment

*July 2013 through June 2014*

## Table of Contents

- Commission Overview ..... 3
- Executive Committee ..... 4
- Policy + Communication Committee ..... 5
- Youth + Community Committee ..... 11

## **Commission Overview**

The City of Seattle's Seattle Music Commission (SMC) was created by Resolution in January of 2010 and met for the first time in June of 2010. The SMC convenes twenty-one Commissioners representing the rich diversity of the music industry in Seattle, with eleven appointees from the Mayor, and ten by the City Council. The Music Commission was ordained (Ordinance #124422) in February, 2014.

The Commissioners held a retreat in June 2014 to assess the fourth year of the SMC and examine progress, accomplishments, challenges and opportunities. Attendees shared their perspectives on the overall impact of the SMC's fourth year of operation:

*"We are committed to continuing to advocate for and create opportunities that strengthen the role music plays in building a city that is inclusive, community focused and supports musicians, live music and music business."*

*"The continued growth of the SeaTac Music program to include live performances by local musicians and the new partnership with the Office of Arts & Culture and the Arts Commission around The Creative Advantage means more people, in the city and beyond, are able to experience Seattle as a City of Music."*

*- Seattle Music Commission*

The Commissioners reviewed progress against the last Annual Workplan of the Seattle Music Commission, which set out key areas of focus and action for the twelve-month period from July 2013 through June 2014. The Workplan aligns with the *City of Music: A vision for the future of music in Seattle* document that was developed by a community advisory group with the City of Seattle Office of Film + Music (OFM) in 2007, and was intended to inform planning and strategy for the music industry and the larger community. *City of Music* frames Seattle as a city of musicians, live music and music business.

This document outlines the progress each committee has made based on the 2013-2014 Workplan, and notes related opportunities that have emerged over the past twelve months.

## Executive Committee

*"We're always looking for new ways to engage musicians, business and the community through music. This past year has been an exciting opportunity to deepen collaborations and look to begin new programs."*

- Holly Hinton, SMC Vice Chair

This committee's work is focused on overarching SMC issues, ensuring the smooth and effective operation of the Commission, in collaboration with the City of Seattle and the broader community.

The Executive Committee focuses on four areas of work:

1. Managing SMC affairs and meetings in collaboration with OFM staff
2. Sharing knowledge and facilitating communication between the SMC and key city departments, County or State offices and Seattle entities that may impact the music sector
3. Ensuring Commission-led initiatives include equitable access and inclusive problem solving for all local neighborhoods and communities, in particular those that are underserved
4. Reporting out to the community, Mayor and City Council as the 'face' of the Commission, whether it be delivering the annual report or on a more frequent case-by-case basis

The Executive Committee oversaw the selection and nomination process for three new Commission seats in this Workplan Year. Thorough consideration is always given to potential nominees and final recommendations are made to both the Mayor and City Council who make the final selection and appointment of new Commissioners. As the work of the SMC continues to be more recognized, potential candidates have begun approaching the SMC directly with interest in serving.

This year, the Executive Committee expanded its commissioner recruiting outreach to include younger members of the music community with the hope of broadening our impact on youth and newcomers to the industry, and to ensure the SMC maintains cultural competency and inclusiveness as we develop programs looking forward.

The Executive Committee also formed a sub-committee and began work developing key measurements and strategies to integrate principles of the City's Race and Social Justice Initiative (RSJI) into all aspects of its Workplan and evaluation.

The SMC Executive Committee initiated collaboration with the Seattle Arts Commission (SAC), Office of Arts & Culture (OAC) and expanded it to include the Youth + Community Committee in 2014 to work together on advancing The Creative Advantage. This synergy between city departments, joint commission work groups and Seattle Public Schools will strengthen our collective ability to effect positive change in the Arts and Music communities and will continue to expand in the years to come.

## Policy + Communication Committee

This committee focuses on gathering information and insight regarding city and regional planning and policy and how the music sector can participate and contribute to the vibrancy of the city. In addition, they monitor and advance issues of image, branding, audience development, outreach, and sector recognition in support of the City of Music Vision for 2020.

Five key areas were most notable from July 2013 to June 2014 and are detailed below:

1. Sea-Tac Airport: Experience The City of Music
2. Music in Seattle Waterfront Redevelopment
3. Seattle Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce
4. Representation on City-wide Initiatives and Policy Development
5. City of Music Initiative Awareness and PR Campaign

*“The music program has been a unique experience for passengers, and they love it! We couldn’t be happier with the responses received from travelers and with the opportunities it provides local musicians.”*

*- Seattle Port Commissioner John Creighton*

**‘Experience The City of Music’ Local Music UX at Sea-Tac Airport.** Sea-Tac Airport’s music program grew and evolved this past year and continues to introduce local talent to the world while enhancing the overall climate and visitor experience of SeaTac Airport, which is managed by the Port of Seattle.

Program offerings over the past two years garnered record customer approval ratings and were

overwhelmingly well received by travelers. For January through May of 2014, 94% of all customer feedback about their airport experience was positive with 67% of the feedback mentioning the music program. On a global level, Sea-Tac was awarded ‘Best Arrivals Experience’ by Future Travel Experience, an international trade publication.

The airport’s overhead music and announcements catalogue expanded to include 200 messages recorded by 40 different local music personalities such as Macklemore and Quincy Jones. The diverse and eclectic catalog of local music played overhead in the terminal grew from 165 to more than 600 songs and showcases over 200 artists from Neko Case and Death Cab for Cutie to Pearl Jam and Jimi Hendrix; and travelers continue to discover our local music talent via the free Wi-Fi music player. Content and production partner PlayNetwork produced 25 new video spots this year, telling our local music story via screens throughout the airport and baggage claim.

The growth of the Live Music Program continues and featured at least three artists from the 34-person roster performing three-hour sets daily, between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. at various locations throughout the terminal. It was also expanded to include locations before and after security check with visitors staying an average of 7.5 minutes longer in areas featuring live music. Musicians are paid a competitive wage – \$100 for a 4 hr. shift – equating to roughly \$95,000 paid out to all of the artists this past year. In addition to that, musicians are allowed to collect tips and sell merchandise which totaled \$164,000 for a total annual compensation of \$259,000.

In 2014, the airport’s concessionaires collectively pledged to contribute funding towards maintenance and expansion of the Live Music program, and a three-year contract was signed with the program’s designer and producer, locally owned and managed Gigs 4 U.



Grand-opening of Sub Pop retail store at Sea-Tac Airport on May 1, 2014

Photo credit: Rachel White

Another major accomplishment this past year was the launch of the Sub Pop retail store at SeaTac Airport. With the help of the Office of Film + Music and the Music Commission, Sub Pop is now part of the airport’s shift towards locally owned and operated retail tenants. The significance of this new venture cannot be overstated – we have a music store run by an independent Seattle record label, operating within a government building (Sea-Tac Airport under the Port of Seattle).

“Opening the retail location at SeaTac was an exciting and logical next step for Sub Pop but also an incredible opportunity to highlight talent in the Northwest music community and introduce local artists and independent record labels to a national and international audience.”

- Megan Jasper, Executive Vice President, Sub Pop and SMC Commissioner

Shortly after the retail store opened, former Nirvana drummer and Foo Fighters front man Dave Grohl visited the store unexpectedly while working on *Sonic Highways*, an HBO special highlighting cities that have been important to the development of the music industry. The store will be used as a backdrop for interviews that will air during the *Sonic Highways* episode featuring Seattle.

The partnership with local pop culture museum EMP continues to grow and evolve, with EMP and Sea-Tac staff planning additional exhibits in the coming year to be installed inside the airport terminal, showcasing historical

tributes to our local music heroes. Plans are also in the works to bring more music-themed artwork into the airport spaces in 2015.

As media and industry attention continued on a positive incline, so did the program's reputation in the local community and global sphere. In 2013 the Port of Seattle integrated the music initiative brand into its identity campaign which can now be experienced throughout Port of Seattle properties.

This music steering committee will continue in its advisory capacity to guide development of the SeaTac Airport music project vision, and will continue to consult with vendor PlayNetwork and Port of Seattle representatives. The objective remains: enhance the user experience at the airport by showcasing the region's diverse and far-reaching musical identity and activity.

**Music as it relates to Seattle Waterfront Redevelopment Planning.** Commissioner participation on the Waterfront Development Committee continued in 2014 and expanded to participation on the City's Waterfront Cultural Taskforce. The 15-member taskforce was convened to work with local cultural leaders and develop recommendations for these spaces, especially related to "Festival Pier" at Pier 48 (part of a site also known as Washington Landings.)

The taskforce was charged with three goals: provide specific recommendations for effective cultural venues at the waterfront; identify and articulate conditions necessary for effective and impactful cultural programming within and across the suite of various future waterfront spaces; and engage a broad regional community of leaders who produce and present cultural activity of varying scales and disciplines. Commissioners attended meetings and participated in focus groups, the result of which was delivered to the City by Andy Fife Consulting.

The Committee will continue supporting SMC representatives participating in these planning meetings, and work to facilitate deeper engagement with the new Executive Office of the Waterfront. These individuals are tasked with updating the committee and the SMC on progress of development plans, as well as opportunities for the Commission to voice its support for music as an integral piece of Seattle's waterfront development.

**Seattle Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce.** Through committee members and guidance of the SMC, the Chamber continued growing its Music Industry sector strategy this year.

Since rolling out their initiative, the Chamber has highlighted the music industry at local and regional conferences, panels, and economic sector focused events. This year, the Chamber held its first ever Music Industry After Hours networking event at the former Lively Studios in SoDo. OFM Director Kate Becker and Executive Director of the Pacific NW Chapter of The Grammys, Michael Compton spoke about the local music industry and encouraged the 144 attendees from Music-focused Chamber member companies in attendance to continue the collaboration that has brought Seattle this far.

In addition to the programmatic inclusion of the music industry in Chamber social events and professional development seminars, live and recorded local music has also been a feature of many high profile events. For the first time at the Chamber's annual IN-NW social media conference the keynote address was delivered by a musician, award winning hip-hop artist Hollis Wong Wear, to a sold out crowd and at their 131st Annual Meeting local electro-soul duo Fly Moon Royalty performed a spine tingling musical mash-up with Seattle Opera tenor Karl Marx Reyes.

The committee will continue to collaborate with the Chamber to grow their Music Initiative by expanding their professional development and networking opportunities to include content relevant to music industry members and continuing to creatively incorporate and highlight local musical talent at key industry events.



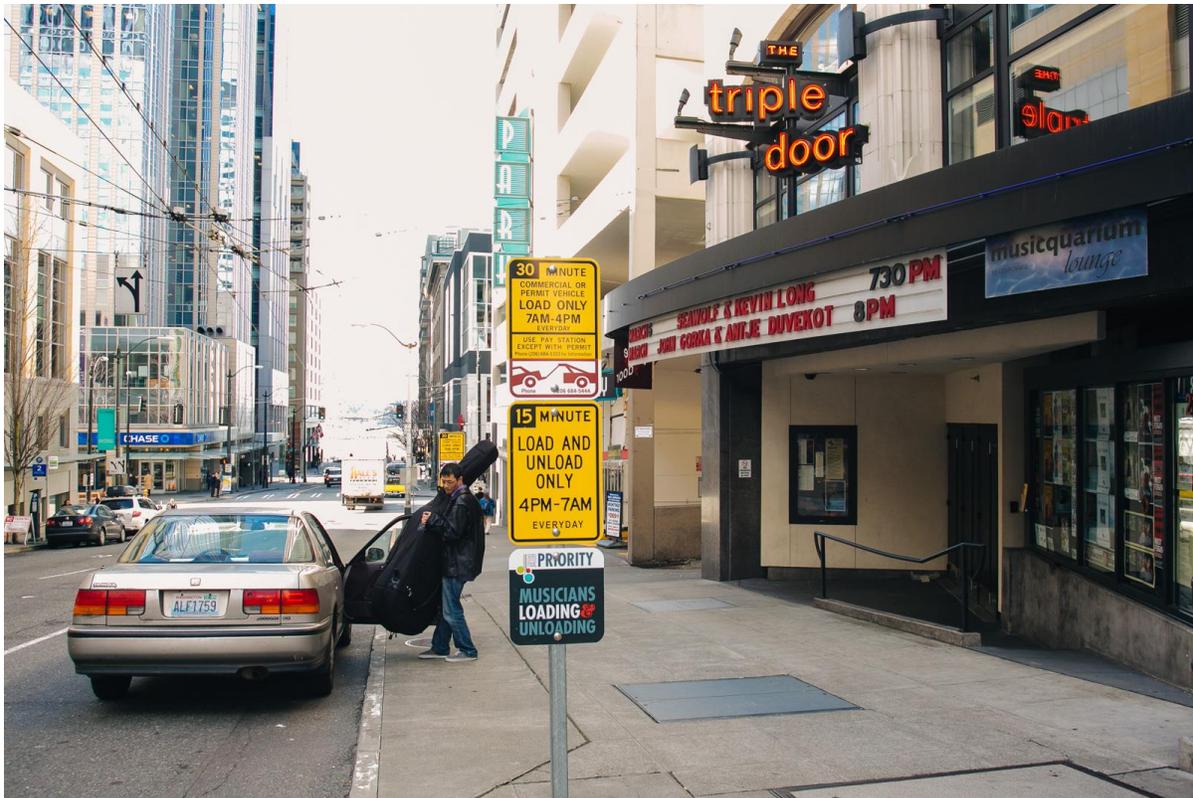
Fly Moon Royalty's Adra Boo (left) with Seattle Opera tenor Karl Marx Reyes (right) at IN-NW

PHOTO CREDIT: Rachel White

**Representation on City-wide Initiatives and Policy Development.** This Committee is charged with discovering opportunities where the SMC could serve in an advisory capacity for key organizations and participate in important civic discussions. In addition, it monitors relevant issues affecting the music industry such as local, Federal or State government policies.

This year, the Committee monitored and/or weighed in on several policy issues that were particularly relevant to the local music industry.

To address the needs of our local working musicians, the 'Musicians Priority' loading zone program was launched in March of 2014 and serves five of our local live music venues in four loading zone locations. Thanks to partnerships with the Fair Trade Music and Musicians Association of Seattle as well as leadership by Seattle's Department of Transportation, the City increased accessibility for musicians to load and unload their gear when performing in neighborhoods with complicated parking situations.



Musician Priority load zone sign in front of The Triple Door in Downtown Seattle

Photo credit: Rachel White

It is anticipated that the pilot program will become a permanent addition to the City's parking and load zone policy, and that it will grow as qualifying locations are identified in months to come. Already, counterparts from other American music cities have contacted OFM to learn more about the background and implementation of the program, which is considered a policy model.

**City of Music Initiative Awareness and PR Campaign.** This Committee is also charged with developing strategies and executing plans designed to raise awareness and reach of the Commission's mission and initiatives.

An unprecedented outpouring of support and partnership opportunities came before the Music Commission this past year. Seafair expanded their live music offerings at public events, and branded them all as City of Music events. The Commission also joined forces with local businesses and non-profit organizations to support Seattle and King County Parks through a unique awareness campaign - Pianos in the Parks.



Photo credit: Rachel White

This month-long public art and musical discovery campaign was designed to shine a spotlight on our region’s public parks and bring communities together in public spaces through the power of musical discovery. The campaign was a huge success and featured in nearly 100 print, online and broadcast news outlets, including *The Seattle Times*, *My Northwest*, *KOMO News*, *The Stranger*, *Evening Magazine* and more. With social media included, over 28 million impressions were garnered during the month-long program.

Combined with local and national coverage of the Musicians Load Zone program, Sea-Tac’s Experience The City of Music program, City of Music Career Day, and Music Is A Real Job infographic, word of Seattle City of Music has spanned the globe and become part of the city’s cultural identity.

## Youth + Community Committee

This Committee is focused on assessing, creating, and encouraging action in support of activities and programs that enhance access, education, life-long learning, recreational, and neighborhood benefits of music in Seattle.

Two key areas were most notable from July 2013 to June 2014:

1. Work with Seattle Public Schools (SPS), the Office of Arts & Culture and the Arts Commission to advance *The Creative Advantage* and ensure equitable music and arts education access for students K-12.
2. Continued collaboration with local non-for-profit arts presenter/producer One Reel to broaden the scope of the City of Music Career Day and City of Music Community Expo events.

*"We're on the road to success! Our partnership with the Office of Arts & Culture, in support of The Creative Advantage, resulted in the elimination of the access gap for arts and music learning in Central Area schools. We're making progress and we've only just begun. "*

*- Seattle Music Commission*

**The Creative Advantage.** To meet the vision of the City of Music in 2020 it is essential that SPS provide equitable and accessible music instruction for all students in grades K-12.

The Committee played a significant role in building a swell of support from both the Music Commission and the Seattle Arts Commission in support of the SPS *Creative Advantage* campaign. A partnership was formed between both Commissions and, with the unexpected

increase in Admissions Tax Revenues from local tourist attractions, a dedicated position in the Office of Arts and Culture now manages and spearheads *The Creative Advantage* efforts to develop and implement the five-year plan to fund music and arts education for every public school student. Critical to this effort is the emphasis on racial and socioeconomic equality in access to arts and music education. The partnership between the two Commissions represents a significant bridging of efforts that can help to achieve shared goals regarding music education in Seattle.



Students perform on-stage with Sol at Capitol Hill Block Party

Photo: Avi Loud

As a result of SAC and SMC collaboration, *The Creative Advantage* received support and exposure at some of the community's largest music and arts festivals this year, including Capitol Hill Block Party, Bumbershoot, Umoja Fest, and the Mayor's Arts Awards. A campaign to ask participants "What Makes Seattle a Creative City?" at all the festivals resulted in creative conversations, social media interactions and increased visibility for *The Creative Advantage*.

Washington Middle School and

Seattle JazzED students, under direction of Aaron Walker-Loud, even performed with local hip hop artist, Sol, in front of huge crowds at Capitol Hill Block Party, and again at Bumbershoot.

Members of the Music Commission will continue to participate in the development and outreach efforts to support the program and ensure its continued growth and success to benefit all students, our future leaders.

*“City of Music Career Day is the program I wish had been here for me when I was young.”*

- Commissioner Jon Stone

**Annual City of Music Career Day.** The Youth + Community Committee continued to collaborate with One Reel to produce the annual City of Music Career Day, an event geared towards outlining career pathways into the music industry for Seattle area youth. This event supports this effort in two ways: engaging youth early in their career development and connecting them directly with industry representatives and potential music industry career paths, and working with the music industry to enhance and

communicate opportunities now and in the future. City of Music Career Day is a free one-day program jam packed with information about ways students can propel themselves into a career in the local music industry.



City of Music Career Day 2014

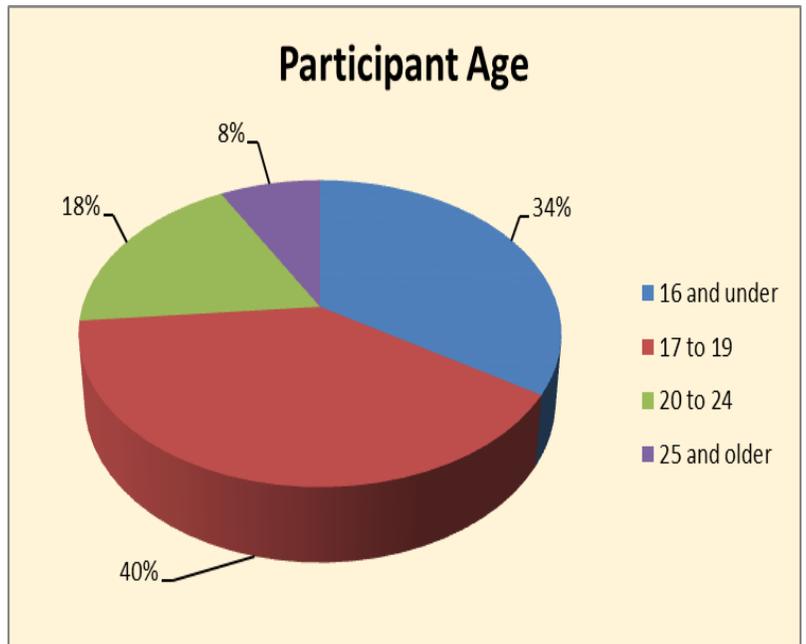
Photo credit: Rachel White

At City of Music Career Day, attendees learn strategies and hear recommendations from some of the area’s industry leaders on how to gain access, grow and develop their career path, and succeed and earn a living in the music industry. Plus, attendees get the chance to interact with organizations looking for interns or volunteers and may gain exposure to career paths and options they didn’t realize existed. By building these connections at

the high school and college level and creating a talent pipeline in the music industry, we are ensuring the future prosperity of our local talent as well as the local music industry.

The third annual Career Day was at capacity prior to the event, which took place in April of 2014. This success is thanks in large part to a new partnership with EMP Museum, where the all-day event found a new home. A packed audience of local youth was treated to an immersive look at the music industry and given direct pathways of entry into the music business.

Efforts to ensure outreach is expansive and inclusive of all communities, particularly those that are underserved, were doubled this year. Attendance at Career Day 2014 was over 67% female and 74% of participants were high-school age. Thanks to transportation arranged by Mayor Murray’s staff, approximately 20%<sup>1</sup> of the Seattle-area high school attendees came from South Seattle.



The Youth + Community Committee will continue offering strategic and programmatic support to this program and anticipate another full house at the next Career Day event in 2015.

**The City of Music Community Expo.** This event was conceptualized and launched in 2012 as a joint effort of the SMC and One Reel, aiming to create a connection between Seattle’s small, but highly impactful, non-profit music education organizations and targeted potential audiences. The SMC seeks to connect these organizations to share information, assess needs, and explore opportunities for collaboration.

The second City of Music Community Expo took place again at Bumbershoot: Seattle’s Music & Arts Festival in 2013 and included previous participants and newly identified organizations and was the most successful yet for participating organizations in terms of engagement, exposure, audience participation, newsletter sign-ups, etc. There was also impressive participation from the individual non-profits including booths, displays, and creative methods of engaging the public.

The Youth + Community Committee will continue collaborating with the event’s producer, One Reel, as a conduit for both programming and development strategies.

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This Assessment Report was completed in December 2014 by the Seattle Music Commission’s Executive Committee. Advising the assessment process was Claudia Bach with AdvisArts Consulting.

<sup>1</sup> Statistical references gathered by survey and registration data.